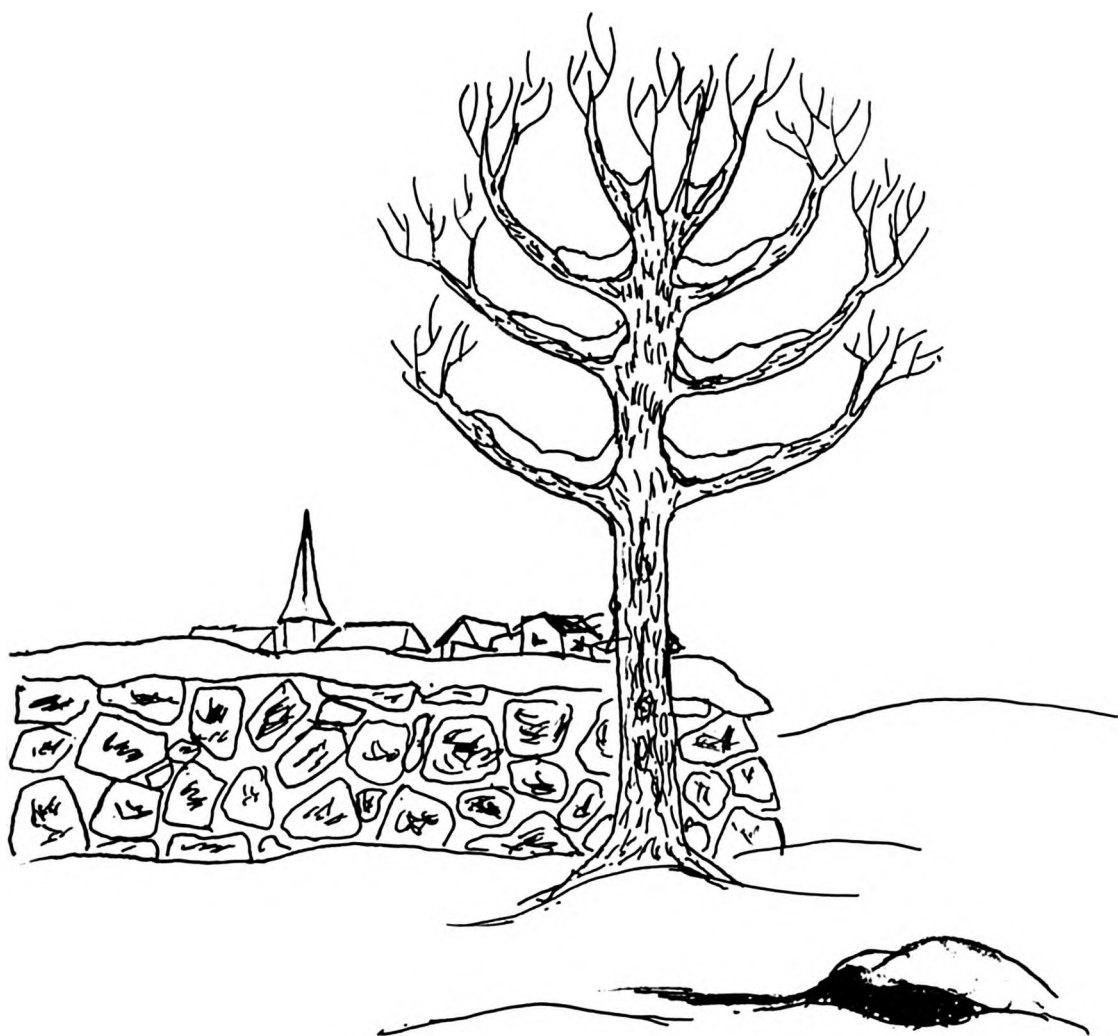
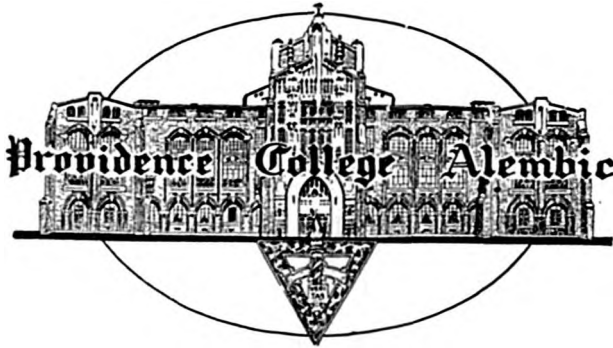


ALEMBIC



Winter, 1962

THE ALEMBIC



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY THE
STUDENTS OF PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

The ALEMBIC is published bi-monthly by the students of Providence College, Providence, Rhode Island. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, Providence, Rhode Island, December 18, 1920, under Act of March 3, 1879. Subscription \$2.00 the year. "Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103. Act of October 3, 1917; authorized April 9, 1932." Printed at the Oxford Press, Providence, Rhode Island.

THE STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

RICHARD A. LEIDIG

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

STEPHEN OEHMSEN

EDITORIAL BOARD

ROBERT B. BREITENBACH

TERRENCE DOODY

DAVID GRACE

BRIAN HENESSEY

EDWIN KIMBALL

ART ASSOCIATES

MICHAEL SULLIVAN

MICHAEL ST. ANGELO

FACULTY MODERATOR

REVEREND ROBERT LINUS WALKER, O.P.

ALEMBIC CONTENTS

VOL. XLI

WINTER, 1962

No. 2

	Page
Cover Design.....Michael St. Angelo, '65	
An Average Joe.....Robert Breitenbach, '63	5
Silent BeautyMartin Schwartz, '63	14
The Worth of Love.....W. S. Minot, '62	15
The Day the Wind Died.....Mario L. Calouri, '63	17
The Parliament of Drudgery.....John F. Smollins, Jr., '62	21
Pensee A L'Aube.....Richard Kentile, '62	27
Ibsen's Humor.....Richard Leidig, '62	28
HaikuTerrence Doody, '65	35
Adamant Courage.....John F. Smollins, Jr., '62	36
The Altruists.....R. J. Velleca, '62	37

An Average Joe

ROBERT BREITENBACH, '63

JOE SMITH, a clerk in the home office of a monopolistic American steel firm, is fed up. He is tired of the abuse that is being heaped upon him from all directions. He doesn't understand why the moralists are always picking on him. How can they call Joe apathetic? There is nobody in his office more enthusiastic about the Yankees than he is. As for being called disrespectful, Joe shrugs his shoulders and agrees. After all, he is equal to his boss in everything except rich relatives, isn't he? When accused of religious mediocrity, Joe angrily replies that he contributes to the United Appeal and that he goes to church as frequently as anybody else in the office.

Joe's personal opinion is that the world is in the best possible condition. Those harping philosophers — probably underpaid professors — are just disgruntled with their social status. Joe is glad he isn't a poverty-stricken intellectual. He suspects that not a few of the critics are priests, but they can be excused. They have been pessimistic for two thousand years. Another thing that Joe doesn't understand is the lack of perception on the part of these educated men. How can anyone say that this progressive world of ours is decaying? New buildings are being built; new cars are being bought; new drugs are being discovered; new babies are being born. Everything seems to be improving. Man is forging ahead. Look at New York, the heart of the world. Never was there a building taller than the Empire State Building—not even the ill-fated tower in Babylon. And don't forget those modern offices which are equipped

with I.B.M. machines that relieve Joe of the burden of thinking. Joe remembers reading how organized the Romans were before they fell, but he is sure that his office is more efficient than Caesar's was.

Rockefeller Center, Joe's office building, is the center of his life. If someone were to ask Joe what the epitome of western civilization is, Joe wouldn't hesitate in naming the Center, the symbol of both the progress and the goals of modern man. This towering structure is located on Fifth Avenue directly across the bustling street from a gloomy-looking building called Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The Center houses home offices for almost every major company in America. Joe thinks that these offices make it the center of the world. Washington might be the hub of politics and Rome of religion, but they are secondary to Joe's building because it is the focal point of American business. Without American business Washington would be powerless and Rome would be penniless. Without American business, modern men like Joe would still be as backward as those undignified-looking people who come out of the Cathedral across the street.

A typical office is the roomy suite occupied by the vital Tinny Steel Corporation of America. Where would man be without steel? Joe wouldn't have his indispensable car for vacations; the United States wouldn't have the arms needed for civilizing the world; and, what is more important, without steel Joe's office building wouldn't have been possible.

Advertising offices are also located in the Center. Joe isn't sure why, but he is certain that they are just as indispensable as the steel companies. Joe can't conceive of life without television commercials, billboards, and magazine

An Average Joe

advertisements. Joe's wife would never be able to decide what to buy at the store if she wasn't pre-advised by that friendly man on television. During long rides in the country, Joe is always grateful to the thoughtful men who have erected the billboard pictures of Roger Maris which keep Joe's children from becoming bored with the unexciting scenery. Joe is the most appreciative, however, of the newspaper advertisements. Without them Joe would never know what kind of suit, car, or house he is supposed to buy.

While the steel and advertising offices, according to Joe, reflect the very essence of America, other offices, like the airlines, exemplify the cultural side of our civilization. Joe believes that airplanes, like books, are a necessary means for escaping the boredom of everyday routine. He isn't implying that life in the Center is fatiguing. It is just that his office-orientated life seems to be lacking something. Joe isn't sure what it is, but maybe if he would take a plane trip to some far away place, this mysterious deficiency would identify itself. He has heard that the sunny beaches of Florida do something for a man. There is no doubt that the Florida posters in the airline office depict scenes entirely different from New York. The only trouble is that Joe knows a few people who flew to Florida and back but were still bored. Joe will have to try some other distant spot.

As important as the business offices might be, there are other attractions in the center. The ice rink, for example, attracts visitors from the far reaches of the globe. Sometimes Joe wonders about these visitors. Could it be that the far away places that attract New Yorkers are lacking something that the New Yorkers have? The whole situation is confusing, so Joe doesn't let it worry him. After

all, the very fact that the rink draws visitors proves that it must symbolize something good.

All types of people are seen in the area around the rink. There are short, shoving Jews; husky, arrogant Negroes; thin, boisterous Irishmen; and slanted-eyed Chinese. One day Joe asked several of the visitors why they came to the Center. Most of the interrogated visitors looked at him as if he were crazy and then walked away. The few who did answer his question informed Joe that visiting Rockefeller Center is the thing to do.

While observing the crowd one day, Joe noticed that everybody was wearing approximately the same styles. Stopping to think about it, Joe recalled that even though the styles change every year, the crowd is always wearing the latest. Joe's chest swelled. This is freedom in action. Everybody has a chance to buy the newest style. Our observer admits that sometimes he doesn't like the current styles, but that isn't important. What does matter is that each American citizen is able to buy whatever the fashion experts say that he should.

Joe's own reason for liking the skating rink is simple: the pretty girls. Since he can't afford expensive night clubs with flashy chorus lines, Joe watches the girls skating on his rink. He also enjoys the obscene remarks that other men around the rink are always making about the skaters' scanty costumes. He never will forget the day that he contributed to the rink-side discussion. It was a windy afternoon last winter, and, even though the temperature was below thirty degrees, the girls on skates still wore their inadequate costumes. Joe, feeling better than usual, snickered to a tall stranger next to him that the girl in pink looked like she would be an interesting date. Joe, being

An Average Joe

very proud of the way that he pronounced the word *interesting*, expected to receive an approving smile from the stranger. Instead the stranger stared at Joe's grin, then at Joe's wedding ring, and finally at Joe's face again. "What would you say if I said that about your wife or daughter?" the stranger asked. Joe was dumbfounded. He had never thought of that before. He had always thought of all women besides his wife as not being very important. They only existed for Joe's pleasure. But if anybody had such thoughts about his wife, Joe would resort to violence. "Where is that wise guy?" Joe shouted. The man was gone. Our friend had to talk to that man. Joe searched through the crowd for the tall stranger, but he was nowhere to be seen. Joe ran towards Fifth Avenue. Suddenly he saw the antagonist. He was entering Saint Pat's. No wonder he acted that way," thought Joe. "He is one of those fanatics."

Sometimes, when the wind is too strong and Joe has a little extra money, he joins his friends from the office in the glass-enclosed bar that overlooks the skating rink. They all like Scotch and soda. They sip it slowly so that they can enjoy the full flavor. Scotch is made in Scotland, you know, and Scotland, contrary to differing reports, is actually part of England, and anything English, according to the articles in *Harper's*, is good. Consequently Joe doesn't mind the cotton-like taste of Scotch. After a few glasses he becomes used to it anyway. Besides it doesn't give him a hangover after his frequent drinking sprees. Not that Joe wants to get drunk; he only wants to forget. Joe is bored. It isn't his foreign car, his tri-level house, his beautiful wife, his two children, his friendly neighbors, or his high-paying job that depress Joe, but rather it is something

that he is lacking. And since he can't afford to take a plane to far-away places every time that he gets bored, he drinks Scotch. Joe's doctor warned him that too much Scotch will rot his brain, but what can Joe do? If only one of those far-away places were close to the center, Joe would be cured.

One day while reading the office bulletin board—it contains the bowling scores—an important-looking notice caught Joe's attention:

A Lecture will be given on
the soul of Rockefeller Center.
Tuesday—8 p.m.

Neither Joe nor his friends were sure what the word *soul* meant, but they decided to go to the intellectual-sounding talk anyway. The lecturer—a professor from Harvard, of course—started his talk with a definition of soul. “The soul is a reflection of an impulse in man to do good. Thus every father desires the welfare of his family and every organization desires the good of its members. What is good for one member of a family or for one member of an organization won't always be good for everybody else. Social and scientific experimentation is the only way to discover what is good for each person. Keeping this definition in mind, let us now discuss the soul of Rockefeller Center. The soul of this magnificent edifice is often referred to as the ‘Foundation’, but that is a cold term. For the Foundation is not an impersonal philanthropist, but rather it is a living organ trying to find points of agreement among all of the people in the world. In other words, it is searching for a common good.” At this point Joe lost the professor's train of thought.

The first part of the speech, however, gave Joe enough to think about. He had heard that the Foundation

An Average Joe

had been originally set up to foster medical research and that more recently emphasis had been placed on social studies, but Joe had never thought of it as a soul. After a moment's reflection, Joe suddenly realized that the Foundation had been advancing the dignity of man. Joe couldn't imagine what the world must have been like before the Foundation was founded in 1913. Where would the world be today if the soul of Rockefeller Center did not sponsor the work of the sociologists, philosophers, and historians? How would Joe and his wife ever be able to raise their children if they didn't have their own private library of child-care books written by these famous sociologists? Several times Joe even gave up his Scotch for a while in order to buy the latest book. Joe has discovered that the rearing of a child is a hazardous adventure. If the parent isn't constantly on the alert for the newest theory, he might be accused by the neighbors of retarding the child's growth, inhibiting the child's natural impulses, or giving the child a complex. Without knowledge of what a nine-month-old baby's vocabulary should be, for example, it would be impossible not only to raise a child but also to compare him to the other babies in the neighborhood. Joe can understand the vital importance of the Foundation under this aspect.

Joe has also heard that the soul of the Center has done much for the rights of man. He understands that without the Foundation many rights would never have been discovered. He realizes that the Constitution contains some fuzzy ideals concerning the rights of man, but it lacks the fundamental rights which the Foundation has discovered. Terms like *life*, *liberty*, and *happiness* might mean something to those cynical critics who are continu-

ally picking on Joe, but they are of little value to him. He and his beloved Foundation are interested in the more important rights like entrance into the boss's club or where to sit on a bus. These are the real rights of man. After all, if a man can't be happy while he is alive, what is the use of living?

The historians and philosophers supported by the Foundation are of little concern to Joe. He doesn't understand phrases like "peaceful co-existence" and "the need for a dialogue," but if the Foundation sponsors the work. Joe is sure that it must be vital. Joe was glad that he went to the lecture, for it made him realize that the Center is essential in other things besides business.

Joe Smith continues to live and to think in the same manner as he did from the time that he started to work at the age of eighteen until he retired forty-seven years later. After retiring, Joe leads a life of complete boredom. When he was working at the Center, he had a purpose for living. For without Joe's labor the X to Z section of the filing room would have been in utter chaos. But now Joe has lost his reason for existence. To add to his misery, Joe's wife is trying to run his life and Joe's children have abandoned him. His own children, his little darlings, whom he had been so careful to raise according to the most progressive methods, almost hate him. In his gloomier moods Joe sometimes wonders if he read the wrong authors, if he really ever knew his wife, and, worst of all, if he was really needed at the Center.

Joe spends most of his old age in traveling to those far away spots where he was sure that he would find the cure for his boredom. Joe and his bossy wife go to Florida,

An Average Joe

California, and even Europe. But Joe is still bored, and he will probably die that way.

Joe's life, however, is not unique. Thousands of other people in the United States live and die in the same way. They are raised by the same child-care books, work under the same conditions, dream about the same far away places, and die depressed. If only the thousands of Joe's would think for themselves and occasionally listen to the outdated moralists, their boring world might take on new dimensions. Even seemingly insignificant things, such as Joe's fear of not being in style, have deep repercussions. For when Joe feels compelled to wear what the advertising men suggest, he is, in effect, delegating his free will to the men on Madison Avenue. And when he accepts the word of the airline poster which promises that a solution to his problems will be found in Miami, he is again avoiding the strain of doing his own thinking. Even when Joe does go to those far away places, he is too interested in himself to notice that there are just as many bored people in Madrid as there are on Madison Avenue.

Instead of spurning the corrections of the pessimistic priest and the underpaid professor, Joe should think about them. He should try to understand what they mean when they call him a "conformist," a "materialist," and an "atheist." If Joe would understand that these experts are not attacking him but rather the causes of his depressed feeling, Joe might benefit. Joe never dreams that the cure for his boredom might be found in some Higher Thing to which everything else, including the Center, is secondary. If only Joe had followed that tall stranger whom Joe saw entering the church across the street . . .

Silent Beauty

MARTIN SCHWARTZ, '63

Two, alone;

Alone with the whispering trees

And the silence of darkness moving through her eyes.

Alone with a freckled sky

And the yellow moon painted on a blue canvas.

Alone with the voiceless sand

And the helpless wind wandering across her smile.

Alone with a dreaming ocean

And the mythical night entombed forever in loneliness.

The Worth of Love

W. S. MINOT, '62

One day, just one, beneath a cloudless sky
We put on wings that made us gods among
Blind men who clod-like come, despair, and die,
Though reaching not the ladder's highest rung.
The sky was ours, the earth, the sea; all height
And depth spanned we with hearts by love enflamed
To bliss in soulful, soaring, sonorous flight
To a mountain top which was Olympus named.
Now, stunted, crippled, with wings wrenched off our backs,
We claw the rocks with bloodied fingers torn
And twisted, as pain our wretched being wracks
To make us curse in hate the wings we'd borne.
"Never!" That day to our memories brought
Shows us that it was not too dearly bought.



The Day the Wind Died

MARIO L. CALUORI '63

TOM gazed at the wavering, fragile branches of the denuded elms as they danced against a background of blue February sky. There were many rock-strewn fields, too, between him and the wavering branches. He stood there, leaning against the counter in Marston's Rural Grocery, clad in his smudgy white apron. The late afternoons of winter offered Tom Knohart many moments of fancy — moments which had become increasingly extended ever since he graduated from Hopkin's High.

Clang! The jangling of the bell, hanging on the door, startled him.

"Wha . . ." Tom's stare broke and moved until it became intent upon the excited figure striding through the door.

"What's up Tom?"

"Hey, Phil; how's it going?"

Phil planked his big arms across the counter and started, "Tom, I can't wait for next week; believe me, I can't wait. Here's the chance we've both been waiting for. Oh babe! Just think; we'll have our own ranch someday and in no time we'll be selling steer all over Chicago!"

"Are you sure your uncle's not just throwing you a line?" queried Tom.

"Look, I've read this letter to you five times; he's too old to run the business by himself so he needs two younger men to take over — eventually, the place will be ours. He says so right here. Look. Look, for the sixth time!"

Tom smiled, "Yea, I guess so."

"Just think . . . I'll be out of Junior college in a week. Yipeel!"

"Sounds great, Phil."

"Yea. And you'll be out of this graveyard grocery store. It'll be great, Tom. You wait and see. We can get a train out of Norwich in ten days!"

"Take it easy; we've talked about this thing so many times."

"What's the matter, Tom? You don't sound a bit enthusiastic about the trip anymore. Is something wrong?"

"Naw. I guess I'm just a little bushed. Nothing's wrong."

Phil left and drove back home, apparently reassured by Tom's words. But Tom wasn't alone very long, for the miniature fire-truck bell hanging from the door sounded again as his little brother, Pete, scampered into the market.

"Hey Tom, Tom — mamma's sick! She says it's her ulcers."

"But she was all right just three hours ago. Are you sure?"

Pete shook his head up and down and stood terrorized as Tom rattled him until he finally mumbled, "Stop. Stop it . . . that . . . that hurts."

"Have you told ma anything about my going to Texas with Phil?"

"No . . . no . . . I haven't."

"Bull you haven't. You did tell her didn't you? You did tell her. And I told you to keep quiet. I told you that *I'd* tell her."

Tom bolted out the door and hurried home in his hulky, old Dodge. He found his mother resting sedately

The Day the Wind Died

on the living room sofa. Nancy, Tom's sister, was seated on a hassock next to her.

"She's asleep," whispered Nancy.

"What's the matter?"

"I don't know. She was arguing with Pete in the kitchen when I came home from school. I think she's all right now."

"He told her . . ."

"Tom. What are you talking about? Tom?"

Tom was gone. She could only hear the change in engine acceleration as he drove back to the store. Phil was there again, and Mr. Marston also stood waiting. After Tom had explained his sudden exit from the store to Mr. Marston, he donned his apron and proceeded to tell Phil his story. Mr. Marston retired to the office at the rear of the market.

"But I tell you I can't go on that trip, Phil."

"Why the hell not? Damn it all, Tom, your mother is getting a government check every month; she doesn't need your help. She's probably got ulcers because of you. She's always getting attacks when you want to do something!"

"Who's going to care for her?"

"Listen, Tom, you've got an eighteen year old sister . . . she can do it."

"It would be wrong for me to go away."

Tom was becoming crimson and feverish. His words were being choked in his throat.

"I . . . I can't just go away like this. I tell you it's wrong."

"No, Tom, no. You're not doing anything wrong. You've got a future to look toward. You're mother doesn't really need you."

Phil stopped for a moment and stared fiercely at Tom, expecting a word from him. There were none.

Phil started again, "I've known you for almost sixteen years. Do you think I'd tell you that you should go on this trip if your mother needed you? I'm telling you, Tom, you need this trip. You need it; Damn it, you need to get away more than anyone. You're going to end up an old man before you're thirty. And do you know what you'll be doing? You'll be ringing up grocery sales for Mr. Marston!"

The pallor on Tom's face became doubly apparent as the final rays of sun drew rapidly away from him and settled in their western abode. His eyelids dropped.

"It's all over, Phil; I mean it."

"Do you really, Tom?"

Phil left, slamming the door behind him.

About an hour later Tom was sweeping up when he heard Mr. Marston call:

"What was all the hollering about out their?"

"Oh nothing, Mr. Marston, nothing at all."

He stood there, next to the window, trying to distinguish the wavering branches in the western sky from the encumbering darkness behind them. They were no longer visible to him. Tom bit his lip and finished sweeping up the floor.

The Parliament of Drudgery

JOHN F. SMOLLINS, JR., '62

TOIL, ignoble and wearisome, might be an adequate description of army kitchen police, the most avoided and most feared military detail. Since much of our civilian population has the very erroneous idea that the army is nothing more than a blithe, plush existence, I will endeavor to vividly expound on the horrendous duty known as "K.P."

The setting for our graphic account is a small platoon barracks situated in the heart of the wilderness and swamp country of Georgia, in that place of isolation, that area sealed off from civilization, that jungle of chaos, Fort Benning. The time is 0400 hours. The fatigued, sleepy-eyed day room orderly is making his rounds, waking up those choice men who have attached the tiny white K.P. placards to their bunks. After much groping, stumbling and searching in the pre-dawn hours, he accomplishes his mission. The K.P.'s day has begun.

Three dejected men, robbed of their sleep, cast aside their warm, fleecy, woolen, olive drab blankets and bounce out of their small iron cots to dress as rapidly, as quickly and as silently as possible to enable them to arrive at the dining hall on time without waking their slumbering compatriots. The icy floor demands that the socks be put on initially. Last week's rather soiled fatigues are put on; the dilapidated, ancient, scuffed, black boots are worn. Such is the clothing worn for this special occasion.

The trio make their way down the sinuous stairs to the first floor of the antiquated wooden structure to the

The Parliament of Drudgery

The DRO, with vigor and zest, begins to arrange the chairs, to fill the salt shakers, to replenish the sugar supply on the tables and in general to prepare the room for the arrival of his cohorts. The dishwasher, with alacrity and perception, learns the intricacies of the mechanical monster, the dishwasher. The pot and pan man is given numerous trivialities to perform in order to keep him occupied. He vigorously sweeps the floor, cleans the spotless freezer and renders assistance where he is needed. The recruits will soon learn that the key to success in this sad role is to keep intensely busy at all times. To be a complete success he must be an actor and a comedian. Keeping a lively sense of humor is necessary, is vital, if one is to endure or even survive this situation.

The newcomers are lulled into a false sense of security by the comparative inactivity of the early morning hours. The blare, the blast of the bugle rouses the remainder of the company at 0430. Lights flash on, voices cry out and loud thuds are heard as the men bound out of their beds and leap into their clothes. The loud bark of the platoon sergeant heralds morning formation. The rigid, rigorous daily dozen exercises are performed by the still droopy-eyed men. Through the open window of the mess hall can be heard the melodious chant of the airborne-ranger song and the harmonious tramping, pounding and beating of the thick soled boots on the defenseless ground as the men commence their daily jaunt. The famished throng will soon storm the building and eventually engulf it with their craving personages.

The pulse of the kitchen begins actual throbbing. All is in readiness. The food awaits the men of action, the infantry soldiers. For reasons of training and condi-

tioning each of the men must do three chinups on a bar located at the entrance of the structure before he can file into the dining room for chow. For many this is a formidable challenge. Meal cards are checked by a corporal and the men are served in cafeteria style. All three KPs are tending to the needs of their constituents, serving milk, toasting bread, making orange juice and serving the officers.

After breakfast is served, the enormous, gigantic stint of cleaning up is left to the assiduous KPs. Tables are wiped, dishes are gathered, plates are cleaned, floors are mopped and silverware is collected. The DRO functions effectively in organizing his area while the other two men slave in the rear of the kitchen. Huge billowy clouds of steam are vomited through the enormous toothless jaws of the dishwasher each time the door is opened and dishes are fed to it. The operator of this labor saving marvel suffers with the intense heat emitted from the interior of the machine.

Salty beads of perspiration pour down from his forehead and sting his eyes, the hot soapy water irritates his tender fleshy hands, the stench of refuse nauseates him and unceasing, relentless activity wears him down, saps his energy. Although only morning, it seems as if he has already spent two whole days in this furnace of constant motion.

The pot and pan man, sweltering and sweating, scours, scrubs and re-scrubs the greasy, black utensils. His relentless efforts show little progress. His raw hands, determined countenance and continuous rubbing are constantly noted by the ever vigilant sergeant who prods and plagues the KPs with his incessant, forceful imperatives.

All parts of the body are given a thorough test or trial for the interminable tasks. The DRO strains his arm

The Parliament of Drudgery

muscles with an immense pile of dirty dishes, carries them to the dish window, places them on the aluminum conveyor and bends his knees to pick up numerous pieces of glittering silverware which have gone astray.

The hall is pregnant with movement as each assigned kitchen man is racing about the area carrying out his orders. Only in this job can such rapidity and preciseness in carrying out orders be found. Two newly commissioned second lieutenants attached to the battlegroup staff arrive in the hall to inspect the facilities, the food and the laborers. Their boots gleaming in the radiant electric lights of the hall, their starched, creased, freshly laundered fatigues, their shiny gold bars and their highly polished brass are hints of a rigid, stringent inspection. Tiny rays, flashes of light dart from their lustrous brass as they commence the surprise inspection.

The cuisine crew is carefully surveyed; they must be clean shaven, well groomed and completely unsoiled. The comparatively new officers find no flaws in the appearance of the personnel. Their next step is to meticulously examine the instruments or tools utilized in the preparation of the food. They bring the attention of the sergeant to the white enamel panels of the refrigerator spotted with grease, the trays bearing traces of the past meal on them and the wealth of dust on the window sills. While they remark, "there is room for much improvement here, sergeant," they do commend him for the orderliness of the place. Finally, they supervise and correct the men as they perfunctorily execute their duties.

They specify the temperature of the dishwater; they demonstrate to a frustrated KP the right way to operate the potato peeler; they mingle with the enlisted men in-

quiring about the lessons being learned regarding the effective running of a kitchen. When they feel that their cursory tour has proved of value, that the mistakes and the negligences have been eradicated, they speak to the sergeant and make a hasty exit.

After their departure, the lord of the kitchen gives his laborers a zealous pep talk on mandatory improvement of the place. The time, which has almost evaporated, demands that the men begin preparations for the noon meal which is only an hour and a half away. The process of getting ready for the hungry dinner masses is once again evident as the day seems to be augmented by many, many hours. The team functions in the same manner as for the previous meal. This action will be repeated again at supper. By this time the woe, lamentation and misery of the men will have reached its zenith with their endurance insuperable only because of the much desired vision of relief. At last at 2000 hours, that much longed for relief becomes a reality and the weary troopers trudge back to the much appreciated, much admired and most respected confines of their barracks. Another lengthy day of K.P., a parliament of drudgery, is written down as consummated.

Pensée À L'Aube

RICHARD KENTILE, '62

La lune
astre qui à son plein
ressemble à une grande hostie lumineuse
exposée dans l'ostensoir merveilleux
des cieux
est prise dans les mains
de l'Éternel Grand Prêtre
son Créateur
et cachée ailleurs
dans l'immense tabernacle
de l'espace . . .
Les oiseaux entonnent leur
"Laudate Dominum". . .
Les anges éteignent
les étoiles
qui servaient de chandelles
au salut solennel
de la nature . . .

Ibsen's Humor

RICHARD LEIDIG, '62

A STUDY of Henrik Ibsen's plays reveals intriguing touches of a comic genius that is often overlooked. It is difficult to state a formula of general practice because of the wide range of humor employed; satire, farce, caricature, and irony are used with telling effect. But if Ibsen's accepted purpose in writing is to expose the shortcomings of society, he may be granted an attitude that would effectively point out the incongruous elements in the human condition. Since humor is essentially a human response to an incongruous situation, we should expect its use in the plays of so profound an observer as Ibsen. He used irony most often, bitter or gentle; caricature was needed to draw swift, incisive portraits of stock types who emerged from the dramatist's pen as colorful individuals well suited to the purpose of a play. Farce appears whenever Ibsen feels particularly high-spirited, and satire whenever an entire class or a sanctified institution had to be scathingly criticized. These points may be illustrated by an examination of five plays: *Pillars of Society*; *An Enemy of the People*; *The Wild Duck*; *The Master Builder*; and *John Gabriel Borkman*.

The first play, *Pillars of Society*, has its primary forces of humor concentrated in Hilmar Tonnesen, a cousin of the chief character's wife. His place in the Bernick household, the manner in which he wanders languidly in and out of the play's machinery, enables us to identify an elementary fact of his character—he is a dilettante, an adept social parasite. That is to say, he owes his maintenance

Ibsen's Humor

to the generosity of his cousin. But more than this, he is a professional scoffer who deplotes the lack of opportunities for diversion in his present spiritless surroundings; however, he confines his idealistic interest in robust living to vicarious experiences culled from books. His pompous stand on adventure and the obsessive manner in which he criticizes the education of children amounts to a merciless caricature. Hilmar is painfully conscious of shortcomings in everyone but himself. He can look with scorn upon those whose lives are ordered toward material gain, yet he chooses to ignore the fact that this wealth is the means of his support. His wretched health will not stand loud voices; yet he talks with gusto of American Indians whom he must secretly regard as providentially far removed from Norway. Hilmar is not aware of the self-deception he practices, but continues to perform his gravely pedantic role to the amusement of author and audience.

The next play is *An Enemy of the People*. Again one character stands out as the principle of mirth: this is Doctor Stockmann. A little of the humor surrounding this obstreperous figure derives from the fact that Ibsen used himself as a model for the Doctor's behavior. The Doctor's robust, aggressive approach to society certainly is reminiscent of the brisk reforming spirit of the social plays.¹ In point of temperament Stockmann has an impish quality such as a whimsical tornado might possess. Underneath his seemingly lofty motives with regard to the closing of the Baths there is a strong wish to confound his pompous brother and the other stuffy town authorities. He is also ingenuous; at the opening of the play he is expressing childish

¹Hermann J. Weigand, *The Modern Ibsen* (New York, 1925), p. 108.

delight at the pleasures of a roast-beef platter and a lace table cloth.

Once the conflict has begun, there is a note of satire. Ibsen here inclines to his desire to tell his Norwegian countrymen what he thinks of their governing bodies, political parties, press, and men of affairs. This is especially clear in the dialogue between the Doctor and Aslaksen, Chairman of the Householder's Association. In this excerpt Aslaksen assures Stockmann that he has the support of the town Middle Class. The Doctor's childish wonder at the idea of an impressive, militant Compact Majority (a corporate designation with a comic-opera ring) and his wife's mock distress at an unknown phenomenon expresses a turn of satire intended to sink a barb deep in the flesh of cautious moderation.

When public opinion, led by the fickle press and the pious preacher of moderation, turns against the Doctor, we expect a fight. The Doctor does not disappoint us, and stands before the hostile crowd, the embodiment of all the picaresque heroes of literature. The climax of his triumph is the slapstick routing of Havstad and Aslaksen with an umbrella. He does this in high dudgeon at the insult the two schemers offered him — a chance to get rich by depressing the value of Bath stocks.

The Wild Duck is a study in bitter irony which sets the tone for the entire play. Its central focus is the studio of Hialmar Ekdal and the adjoining garret. This is a world divorced from reality in which illusions make up the daily lives of the inhabitants, who prefer this condition. There is Old Ekdal, Hialmar's father, who was once an army officer and Werle's business associate. Sent to prison in the wake of a business scandal, the old man who was an en-

Ibsen's Humor

thusiastic and skilled hunter, now skulks in a mock forest he built in the garret with Hialmar's help. It is stocked with domestic poultry and rabbits, at which he blasts away with an ancient, double-barreled pistol. This is the sardonic humor of Old Ekdal's illusion. The deception in Hialmar's case is a fatal tendency to play a melodramatic role in a life more suited to prosaic contentment. He is given to frequent posturing; when Hedvig, his daughter, cries in disappointment because her father brought only a menu from Werle's party instead of the promised sweets this is a cue for Hialmar to launch into an impassioned lament concerning the treatment of heads of families. There is also pathetic irony in his interpretation of the exchange of wit at the party with the Chamberlains in which he came out second best. Hialmar's melancholy interludes contrast comically with the lethargic ease that is his ordinary condition.

The other character bearing an ironic stamp is Gregers Werle, a former schoolmate of Hialmar's and son of Werle the capitalist. Gregers' irony is that he is a superfluous man; in his own words it is his destiny to be "thirteenth at table"—an excess, worthless commodity. To combat his feelings of superfluity he wishes to become important. In his clinging to the operation of life on the basis of a literal Ideal, Gregers is seen as a hopeless medler and visionary whose attempts at reform end in failure. He cannot change his father's preoccupation with material concerns nor instill in him a sense of exaggerated propriety. Finally we can treat the plot of *The Wild Duck* as ironic, with a grim ending that borders on the horrible: in his attempt to rebuild a

¹Mencken, *Ibsen's Plays*, Act V, p. 587.

prosaic family's life on the basis of truth and personal sacrifice a consequence which was not taken into account followed. It is not the wild duck that is sacrificed as a token of love, but Hedvig. This bloody denouncement sets the stage for Hjalmar's pious elegy and regret; at the last he has not been reformed.

The plot of *The Master Builder* contains an element of sentimental comedy since it develops the relationship between a young girl and a middle aged man, a relation that is pursued to the excess of classical Greek comedy. The actions of Master Builder Solness, motivated by the bewitching Hilda Wangel, are examined and held up to scorn. Under her influence the conflict between Solness and his wife over the presence of an attractive young woman in his office is bound to grow more intense, yet he cannot refuse Hilda's request. Solness is becoming a pitiful figure; now that he has reached middle age he sees young men as enemies waiting to usurp his position. Therefore it is only through extreme reluctance and a grudging sense of Hilda's power that he signs the young assistant Ragnar's release. His last foolish yielding to her whims is the most ironic of all. In Hilda's ingenuous, child-like emotional state she regards Solness as the subject of a romantic fixation with a reference to thrilling power. This image was fixed in her mind when at the age of thirteen, she watched him climb to the pinnacle of a church tower to fasten a wreath. Her hunger for thrills kept this memory alive. Through an association with the heroic quests of medieval knighthood Hilda would have Solness repeat the performance. Infatuated, the Master Builder accedes to her whim. He mounts the tower of his new home and then, seized by vertigo at the apex, falls and is killed. His pathetic attempt

Ibsen's Humor

to overcome the limitations of age and the cleavage between generations is Ibsen's ironic examination of his own state of mind; he had recently been charmed at Gossenass by an eighteen year old Viennese girl, Emilie Bardach.¹ Thus the plot of this play in summary is Ibsen himself shedding salt tears over his lost youth.²

The final play, *John Gabriel Borkman*, contains a fine piece of irony in the last act. It is a danse macabre that breaks in on a solemn funeral dirge. The function of the incident is to accelerate the progress of the action which would otherwise become psychologically stagnant.³ The occasion is the dialogue between Borkman and Foldal, the mild-mannered clerk who has maintained Borkman in his illusions over the years of his disgrace. In the sharp resolution there is no longer any cause for fallacy; anything that happens will wound or it will act as a binding force. But it will be done in the presence of truth.

When Foldal comes upon Borkman standing outside the house, the clerk is limping, and announces that he has been run over by a sledge. In the following conversation Borkman can cynically anticipate the good news that the joyous Foldal begins to relate. He then proceeds to inform the clerk that his own daughter Frida was in this very sledge. Foldal's reaction to this revelation approximates ecstasy. Yet consider the image: a determined young woman rides roughshod over the body of her father in search of happiness. The fact that he is happy illustrates a type of insight which is difficult to attain outside the parental category. Moreover, it illustrates Foldal's understanding in a

¹Weigand, p. 356.

²Mencken, Introduction

³Weigand, p. 367.

sublimely ironic manner; he does not recognize the injustice that has been done to him.

Whether, like Foldal, Ibsen's ironic foils remain unaware of their harsh treatment at the hands of society, or whether like Gregers Werle they are allowed a horrible vision of their own plans distorted and tragic, the message of their author remains for us a source of social ideals presented in the most logical form available: the device of pointed humor. If the conditions against which Ibsen waged his dramatic crusade no longer exist, the craftsmanship that wrought such memorable figures as Doctor Stockmann and Master Builder Solness with the deft hand of an ironic genius will retain its perennial appeal.

Haiku

TERRENCE DOODY, '65

Haiku is a form of poetry which has been very popular among the Japanese for several centuries. There are only seventeen syllables in an entire poem: five in the first and third lines, seven in the second. Almost always, a *haiku* makes reference to the season, either by actual statement or at least by implication. This reference is important, for it reveals the poet's traditional emotional response to the weather and the land. But the good *haiku* is more than a statement of feeling or a picture of nature. There is an implied identity between two different things. Finally, the *haiku* is not always expected to be a complete or even a clear statement. The reader of a *haiku* is to bring his own experience to the poem and to re-create it with his own associations and imagery.

THREE

Walking in the rain
I stop short and lift my head
Opening my mouth.

ON LOVE:

Fear-felled my dreams
Arose and walked through spring
Into happy lands.

Happy in my love
I can even forgive them
Walking on fresh snow.

Adamant Courage

JOHN F. SMOLLINS, JR., '62

“Yet, Freedom, yet thy banner, torn but flying,
Streams like a thunder-storm against the wind.”

(Byron, *Childe Harold*, IV .98)

O valiant, valorous Finland, O symbolic Baltic freedom
Rock,

Once again must you put on your regal armor and thwart
tyranny and shock.

The hideous bear's jaws, grotesque and enormous, close
like a merciless vice,

But you, gallant warrior, respond with potent cannon, lib-
erty's price.

The paternal, national spirit of Mannerheim beckons to a
peaceful country's sons

To vigorously man their defying, denying guns,

To join the inevitable struggle for that which they cherish,

Lest the anchor of oppression drag them into a labyrinth of
terror and they perish.

There can be no joy, no elation, no pleasure,

In a land devoid of liberty, a priceless treasure,

In opulent Columbia, adamant courage and noble cause we
much admire,

And staunchly support your ardent freedom desire.

The Altruists

R. J. VELLECA, '62

(A One-Act Play)

CHARACTERS

The Educator, *Professor Youngmind Moulder*

The Doctor, *Doctor Dedicated Dogood*

The Politician, *T. "Manny" Hall*

The Man in the Water, *John Doe*

SCENE: A large rude raft upon a motionless sea. The sun, blazing mercilessly, beats down upon three bent, ragged figures seated upon this raft. A black doctor's bag and a crooked pole topped by a tattered rag complete the picture. (HALL, the most bedraggled of the three, is rocking from side to side.)

HALL (in a weak, sing-song manner) . Water, water, everywhere, and not a drop . . .

PROF. MOULDER (disgustedly) . Oh, shut up!

DR. DOGOOD. Be compassionate, Professor, he's in pretty bad shape.

PROF. MOULDER. Anymore of his sophomoric drivel, and, so help me, I'll kick him into the sea.

HALL (continuing dazedly) . Ohhhhh. I've got to have something to eat or drink. I can't go on. I'm dying.

PROF. MOULDER. I don't know which is worse, his endless babbling, or the sun.

DR. DOGOOD. Come on now, we're in enough trouble without this constant wrangling. It's been days

since we've had anything to eat or drink. (Leaning back, he opens his bag and takes out a thick book) I've been trying to ascertain just what our situation really is . . . (thumbing through the text), and I've noticed signs of esophagostenosis, scurvy, and . . .

PROF. MOULDER (seizing the text and hurling it overboard). Must you use those disgustingly-distended words! We're starving to death and burning to a crisp. That's it, plain and simple. There's no one here to impress, you pompous quack.

DR. DOGOOD (looking after the text). You fool! Look what you've done. (Turning to glare at the Professor) Quack? Why you . . . you puerile pedagogue! If I had the strength, I'd thrash you within an inch of your life!

HALL (suddenly aware of his surroundings). An inch? Hah! (Shielding his eyes from the sun) There isn't a centimeter left between the two of you.

DR. DOGOOD. Mind your own business! I'm addressing this worthless pup.

PROF. MOULDER. Worthless? Where would you Hippocratic hypocrites be without the likes of me? Still slinging hash in your immigrant father's beanery.

DR. DOGOOD. Now you've gone too far!

HALL (weakly). Please. Please. Must even dying men fight? What we need here is a little parliamentary procedure. I'll be in charge by virtue of my experience. Now let's have a little order. (Sighing) This world would fly apart if it weren't for us politicians.

PROF. MOULDER (rising to a breathless crescendo). Shut up! Shut up!! Shut up!!! (Then, sobbing) I can't stand it.

The Altruists

(A long silence follows as the three look around awkwardly.)

DR. DOGOOD (breaking the silence). I think it's time we faced a few facts. Judging from what information I've been able to gather, and from appearances (looking at the Politician), I estimate that we have somewhere in the vicinity of seventy-two hours to live. It's a hard fact to face, I know, but we must face these things with as much courage as we can possibly muster. After all . . .

PROF. MOULDER. Anymore of your sickening bedside manner and I'll vomit. If that's possible after six days without food.

DR. DOGOOD. It's quite possible. You see . . .

HALL (as if in a daze). Seventy-two hours. Seventy-two hours. Seventy-two hours. (Then, beginning to blubber) Seventy-two hours.

DR. DOGOOD. Look at him. The world organizer.

PROF. MOULDER. Leave him alone. It's not a happy prospect. God, I've left so much undone. There's still so much illiteracy, and the presidency at the University, and . . .

DR. DOGOOD. Don't you start weeping, you deluded fool. I've always maintained that it takes a medical man to face up to things. Besides, I think I've got a way out. (Then, ignoring the startled stares of the other two men) Gad, the sun is unbearable.

PROF. MOULDER (with Hall looking on intently). A way out? What's that you say? A way out? What is it, man?

DR. DOGOOD (enjoying himself) . W-e-e-e-l-l. In my many years as a medical man, I've read many a journal concerning . . .

HALL (frantically) . What is it? Please. What's your plan?

PROF. MOULDER. He doesn't have any way out. It's a trick typical of medical men. Keep Hope burning bright in one's breast, and all that antiseptic garbage.

DR. DOGOOD (offended) . Well, if you don't want to hear it.

HALL. No! No! I believe you. Please Doc, tell me.

DR. DOGOOD (looking from one to the other for effect) . Cannibalism. (Then, more nonchalantly) Cannibalism.

(The Professor lies back and begins to laugh violently. The Politician watches him in astonishment.)

DR. DOGOOD (not having expected this reaction) . Now look. We're all professional men. And as such we've got to be prepared to make sacrifices for the benefit of the ordinary man.

HALL. I'll buy that. The ordinary man depends on us. We can't let him down. He's the only reason we are what we are. But cannibalism . . .

PROF. MOULDER (sitting up again) . Well, for once we seem to be in agreement. Whether it be Jacques Bonhomme, Piers Plowman, or John Q. Public, the ordinary working Joe depends on us. (Looking at the Doctor) But the horror of what you're suggesting. Cannibalism?

HALL (distastefully) . Yes. I'm dying of starvation, but I don't know if I can go through with it.

The Altruists

DR. DOGOOD. There is no choice. Absolutely none. It's a question of either all dying, or one being martyred for the common good. One of us should be able to do it in order that the remaining two can continue to benefit Mankind.

HALL (with a show of bravado). I would. I'm always mindful of the duty which goes along with being a key figure in society.

PROF. MOULDER. Good. Then it's settled.

HALL. Now wait a minute!

DR. DOGOOD. Hold on. Hold on. We're going to settle this intelligently. As professionals and intellectuals, we must.

PROF. MOULDER (snapping his fingers). I've got it, we'll vote! Each man will be given a short period of time to plead his case. When all three of us have finished, we'll vote. If any two of us are in agreement as to which of us is of least value to the common man, he'll play host, as it were.

HALL. Is a vote like that possible? I mean, no one will choose himself.

PROF. MOULDER. Of course. And if two of us, in not choosing ourselves, choose the same man, . . . well, there you are.

DR. DOGOOD. That sounds good. It's fitting. The man who is seen to be of least value to the common man will be sacrificed to him. One last beneficial act, so to speak. I like that.

HALL (nervously). How will we go about doing this? I mean, after the vote? We have no fire. We'll have to . . . well . . . you know what I mean.

DR. DOGOOD. A few more hours of starvation and you won't be so fussy. A fire will seem unimportant. As for any other difficulties, my bag contains all the necessary instruments.

HALL. Are you sure this is necessary? That there is no other way?

DR. DOGOOD (impatiently). Quite sure. In the event that we are found later, as in all likelihood we will be, we will claim that there were never more than two of us anyway.

PROF. MOULDER. Sounds good. We may as well get started. Who'll be the first to plead his case?

DR. DOGOOD. Why not go alphabetically? I'll be first, Hall second, and you third, Professor.

PROF. MOULDER. That's all right with me.

HALL. I agree. Let's get going.

DR. DOGOOD (straightening his hair and clearing his throat). Well. It's difficult to begin. My usefulness to ordinary people is such an . . . an obvious thing. (Rubbing his nose nervously) Let's see. You're all aware, of course, of the fact that doctors have been, since pre-Christian times, ministering angels, as it were. We have always held a revered position in the minds of man owing to our self-sacrifice, our unselfishness, our timeless disregard for our own discomfort, our . . .

HALL. Bah! I've never seen a poor doctor.

PROF. MOULDER. And every town has a duty doctor each night to avoid late calls.

HALL. And the rates are fantastic.

PROF. MOULDER. That's right. Those stories about country doctors are AMA propaganda. You know, the image of . . .

The Altruists

DR. DOGOOD (angrily) . Now wait just a minute! No interruptions allowed! This is supposed to be my time period, isn't it? (Settling back to continue) Surely you're not denying that medical men are revered, respected, and above evaluation? Mankind clamors constantly for our attention. Like children in the dark, ordinary men cry for us, seek us out, and bless us with tearful gratitude. And we reciprocate! What doctor doesn't want to change places with a dying patient hundreds of times in his career? What doctor doesn't place the welfare of the common people above his own. (Coming down sheepishly from this plateau of unbecoming eloquence) Well, that's about it. If we had a few lay people here, I'm sure they'd plead my case.

PROF. MOULDER. Well, okay. Now let's hear from you, Hall.

HALL (setting his jaw) . Unaccustomed as I am . . .

DR. DOGOOD. Bro . . . ther, are we in for it now.

HALL. O-kay, o-kay. I'm going to be very brief anyway. (Looking at the Doctor) I don't have to plead for my life. Any fool knows that the directing influence of politicians is the only thing that prevents utter chaos in the world.

PROF. MOULDER. Or causes it.

HALL. Shut up! How many politicians have martyred themselves for a handful of peons and a political ideal? Hundreds. All men look to us for order and direction. All men look to us as their only hope for peace and happiness. And some day, through diligence and a backward glance at history, we'll attain these things. The ordinary man will walk to Utopia on a road cobbled with the souls of self-sacrificing politicians. (Pausing) There is no need for me to continue. Willing as I am to give my life for the better-

ment of the ordinary man, my death at this time would be a waste.

PROF. MOULDER (yawning) . Well, I guess it's my turn.

HALL. Yes. And hurry up, I'm hungry! (With a look of amazed horror) My God! What am I saying?

PROF. MOULDER (chuckling) . It doesn't take you long to acclimate, does it, Hall? (Taking a deep breath) Both of you gentlemen have seen fit to make it quite clear that your survival is an obvious necessity. I can say the same. But I can also go one step further. As we educators go, so go all professional men. Don't forget that all that you are, you are as a result of training. Do away with me and you'll be cutting your own throats as well. Educators give of themselves over and over again. And unselfishly. We may not be required to give our lives so often, but we have done so, and gladly would again. All we want of life is that the ordinary man be not so ordinary intellectually.

HALL. That, and the presidency at the University.

DR. DOGOOD. And the ability to be an intellectual snob.

HALL. And that three-month annual vacation.

PROF. MOULDER. Be quiet! You don't know what you're talking about.

HALL (after a brief pause) . Are you finished?

PROF. MOULDER (vehemently) . No! (More softly) Yes.

HALL. Well, what's next? We were a lot less talkative than I expected.

DR. DOGOOD. Let's get down to the voting. There's no sense putting it off.

The Altruists

HALL. How will we go about it?

PROF. MOULDER. It will have to be done secretly, or we'll have revengeful voting.

DR. DOGOOD. That's right. I have a pencil and a prescription pad in my bag. (He reaches into the bag and produces them. Then, while handing each of them a slip of paper) I'll pass the pencil around.

(The doctor writes on the prescription pad. He then passes the pencil to the Politician, who does the same. Soon, all three slips are located, folded, in the center of the raft. The three men look about nervously. The Politician, who has been chewing his lip and staring at the slips, breaks the long silence.)

HALL. Well, let's have a look. (Clearing his throat) Or should we?

DR. DOGOOD (reaching forward and unfolding one slip). This one says . . . (looking up at the Politician with a smirk) Hall.

(At this, the Politician gasps and clutches his throat.)

HALL. Read . . . read another.

DR. DOGOOD (reaching forward and unfolding another). This one says . . . (breathing a sigh of relief) Professor Moulder.

(At this, the Professor toys with his earlobe and yawns affectedly.)

DR. DOGOOD (smilingly). There's a great deal of good judgement being shown here. I guess it's to be one of you two. (He reaches forward for the third slip.)

HALL (seizing the Doctor's wrist). No! Wait. Wait a minute now. Let's be sensible about this. Are you sure we can't think of some other . . .

DR. DOGOOD (jerking his wrist free). What's wrong, Hall? It's all been agreed. (Needling) Suddenly unsure of your usefulness to the ordinary man?

PROF. MOULDER (gazing steadily at the horizon). Let him open it, Hall. I think I know what the outcome will be.

HALL (clutching at the remaining slip). No! No! Give it to me! I've changed my . . .

DR. DOGOOD (pushing Hall aside). Sit back! What's done is done. (He opens the slip while leaning away from Hall) We agreed to abide . . . (Tearing the slip violently) Damn! Damn! Damn! All that for nothing! Which of you fools chose me?

PROF. MOULDER (relieved). No harm done. We'll just have to choose by lots. We should have done that in the first place.

HALL (visibly shaken). I don't know whether I can go through that again.

DR. DOGOOD (sulkily). All right. All right. Let's get with it. The fates can't be as foolish as you two.

(As Hall and Dogood look on, Professor Moulder breaks three splinters from the raft's edge. He then breaks them to equal size and breaks one in half. He turns to Hall.)

PROF. MOULDER. Choose one.

(Hall wipes his hands on his shirt while licking his lips. Just then Dr. Dogood scrambles to his knees hurriedly and, pointing, screams.)

DR. DOGOOD (frantically). Look! Look! A man in the water! On a log! (The other two rush to the side of the raft on their knees and begin to yell. Soon they pull a

The Altruists

wet, bearded, bedraggled figure aboard. They lay him down with his head on the Doctor's bag.)

DR. DOGOOD (wiping the man's face) . Who are you? Are you from the liner?

HALL. Give him a chance to get his breath.

PROF. MOULDER. He doesn't have on a college ring.

HALL. You would notice that.

JOHN DOE (weekly) . Youse guys got any chow or water?

DR. DOGOOD (thoughtfully) . No. No, we don't. I'm sorry.

JOHN DOE. That figgers.

HALL. What's your name?

JOHN DOE. Oh, yeah. I'm John Doe, boilertender on the Eastern Star. Boy, she went down like a stinkin' rock, dint she? I wuz just gonna get a stinkin' promotion too, ya know. Put my kid troo collidge an all 'at jazz. Well, them's the breaks. (Places the back of his hand against his brow in order to shield his eyes) I've gotta . . . get . . . some . . . (falls asleep) .

HALL. It must have been rough hanging onto a log. He's a little delirious. Didn't he mumble something about college?

DR. DOGOOD (thoughtfully) . Uh-huh. He's just an ordinary guy with a few wild dreams.

PROF. MOULDER (staring at the Doctor) . Doctor. What are you thinking? (The Doctor reaches into his bag and removes a shiny scalpel.)

DR. DOGOOD (fingering the scalpel dreamily) . That should be fairly obvious, Professor.

(Both men look at the Politician.)

HALL (wide-eyed) . Do you mean . . .

DR. DOGOOD. Yes.

PROF. MOULDER (shaking his head) . Somehow I don't feel right about this.

DR. DOGOOD (sliding over to the sleeping figure) . Why not? He's only an ordinary slob.

HALL (dazedly) . Only an ordinary slob.

(Dr. Dogood leans over the figure, the other two watching intently. In the background, thunder can be heard.)

HALL (still in a daze) . Only an ordinary slob.

THE END

